

THE ZULUS, BRAVEST, FIERCEST, MOST SUPERSTITIOUS FIGHTERS ON EARTH



**Zulu Witch Doctor
Making Warriors
Bullet Proof**

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For the fatherland and love of home are prominent characteristics of the Zulus, the fiercest, most bloodthirsty fighting nation in all the world, perhaps. Fighting is their trade as a

people, and the only one at which they are proficient.

With all the ardor of their hot Southern blood, they seek to turn back the encroaching footsteps of the white man from their land.

So, when Chief Bambaata, some months ago, began hurling defiance and bullets at the British upon the frontiers of Natal, eager warriors from other tribes hastened to join him. Witch doctors began sacrificing children and young girls in order to render the black fighters immune from English bullets; the peculiar Zulu war dance was held, and Bambaata's impi went forth to battle.

Zulu uprisings are dreaded beyond all others by the English. Amazingly brave and indefatigable in warfare, these strange people cannot be despised like many other savages. Moreover, during the Boer War these very Zulus were armed with magazine rifles by the English.

When the colonial authorities learned that Zulu witch doctors had been called among the impi of Bambaata, they knew that stern work was before them. The sacrifice of children always means that the Zulu is bent upon desperate deeds.

Before a battle the witch doctors kill little girls—boys are spared, that they may grow into fighting men—and from their bodies concoct "medicine" with which to anoint the warriors in order to render them invulnerable to bullets.

When about to practice their incantations, these wizards smear their faces with a white paint. Around their heads they wear circlets of fish bladders, and their bodies are garbed in bullock's hide.

In one hand they carry a long black switch or a cow's tail, and in the other a short wand. The "doctors" work themselves into a frenzy that is amazing; they dance wildly about the groups of warriors, lashing them with the switch and daubing them with the "medicine."

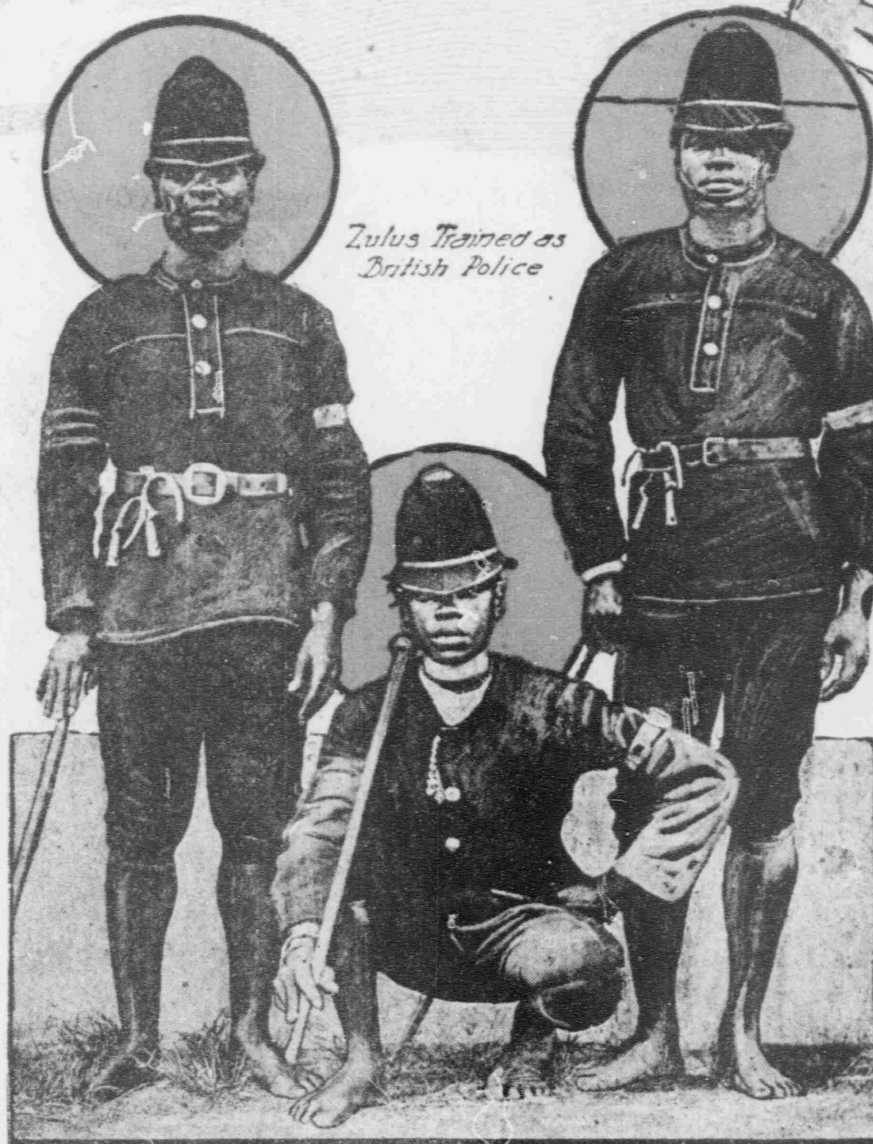
The history of the Zulus has been one of almost constant slaughter. Even their traditions frequently are out through the effects of war.

In fact, nothing authentic is known of their early history or whence they came. They have no written records, and their present traditions go back only about a dozen generations.

H. Rider Haggard, the novelist, who has made an especial study of them, inclines to the belief that they are Semitic in their origin, having, during the centuries, wandered from north to south, exterminating or driving out the tribes that had preceded them.

An evidence of their ferocity is shown by their first descent upon what is now Natal. They found it a thickly populated and prosperous country; in a short time all that remained of the peaceful natives were a few half-starved wretches hiding on the veldt.

According to Mr. Haggard, the Zulus "have habits



Zulus Trained as British Police

Photo from the Philadelphia Commercial Museum.

and ceremonies which are practiced by the Jews and kindred nations.

"They celebrate a feast of the first fruits, as the Hebrews did annually at Jerusalem; they marry the wives of their deceased brethren; they obey similar regulations as to the food they may or may not eat and the ceremonial observance of personal cleanliness."

Until early in the last century the Zulus, although of one race, were divided into many tribes, each under its own chief. The present solidarity was brought about by the greatest and bloodiest of all their chiefs—Chaka—who began his iron rule in 1818.

It is said that during his reign—and it was not a long one—Chaka destroyed over a million people. Out of the fragments that remained he erected the nation, which he called Zulu-ka-Malandela, "People of Heaven."

No tribe, however valiant, could stand before the warriors of Chaka. "Only one of his regiments," says Mr. Haggard, "was defeated."

"After that reverse, he called the survivors—a regiment, or impi, consists of 3000 men—before him and spoke to them 'very softly.'"

"Then he killed them all, and their wives and children with them."

For a time Chaka refused to permit any of his soldiers to marry. Marriage and home ties, he said, made men's hearts soft. At last, when he resumed the rule, he compelled his warriors to wed women who had been thoroughly drilled in military methods and tactics.

Chaka was one of seven brothers, three of whom, in turn, became Kings of Zululand through murder. Indeed, only one King of the Zulus, in so far as is known ever died a natural death.

His mother, two of his brothers and all his children were murdered by Chaka. He would not permit his children to live because he feared they might in time plot against him. He killed his mother because she attempted to conceal one of his children from his murderous eyes.

Having committed this deed, he summoned the entire nation to mourn for the murdered woman. The people gathered by thousands, and were ordered to weep.

Through the ranks of the compulsory mourners the King walked. When he saw a man whose weeping was not violent enough to please him, or of whom



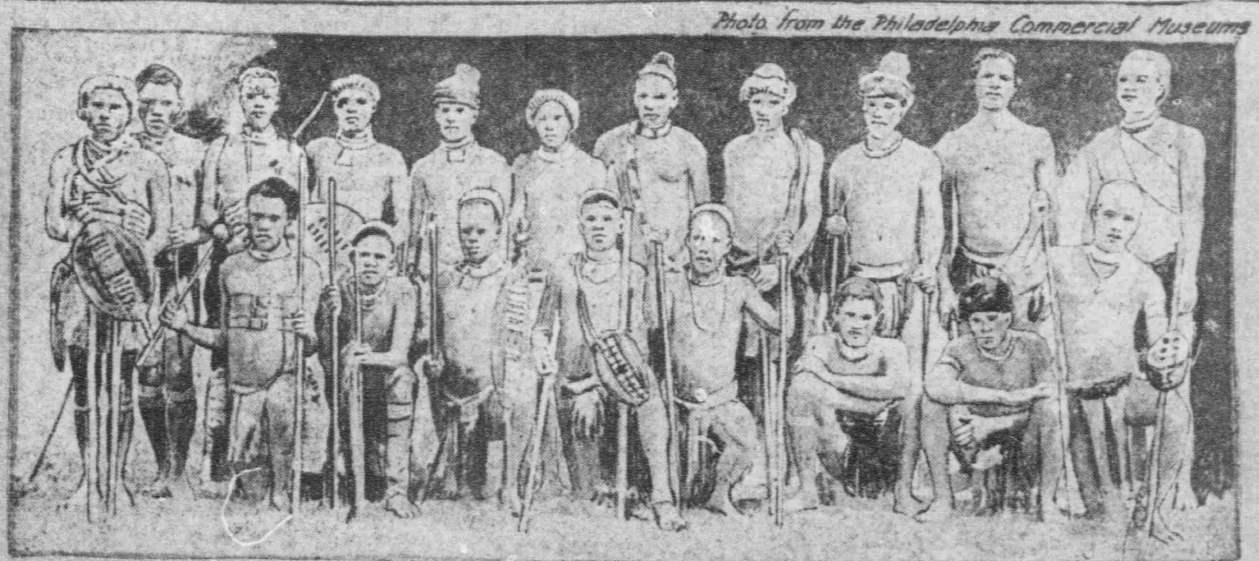
A Zulu Regimental Drummer and his wife.



Young Zulu Warrior in Peace Times



A Zulu Kraal and its Inhabitants



A Company of Zulu Warriors

he wished to be rid, he had the unfortunate taken from the ranks and killed. It is said that hundreds were slain that day.

At last, Chaka himself was murdered by one of his brothers, who seized the throne, only to be slain, in turn, by another brother, Panda.

Panda, who was the only Zulu King to die a natural death, had escaped the fate that overtook his brothers, because he reigned insanity—among the Zulus an insane person is sacred.

So the history of the nation runs—successive chapters of war, murder and rapine. When Panda's two sons were grown, they disputed over the succession and, collecting large armies, fought out the issue.

Umbelazi, the King's favorite, was defeated by Cetwayo, who, in later years, led a bloody revolt against the English, was deposed and taken prisoner to England. When he returned to his own country, he died of poison.

A graphic story of this battle is told by Mr. Haggard, who had the account from an eye-witness, a young man named Osborn, who was hiding upon a neighboring hill.

"Umbelazi's host," he says, "was posted with its rear to the river, toward which it was, by degrees, pressed back by the great impi of Cetwayo. Now Panda had sent one of his own favorite regiments to assist Umbelazi, with orders that it was not to join in the conflict unless the battle turned against him."

"Seeing that the Prince was being worsted, this veteran regiment, nearly 3000 strong, moved out in a triple line to his assistance. As they charged forward, Cetwayo sent a regiment of young men to meet them."

"They came together, and the roar of their meeting shields was like the roar of an angry sea. For a minute the air seemed to be alight with their shimmering spears; then there came a long, slow heave, such as is the heave of a wave above a sunken rock, as Panda's regiment passed over their opponents, utterly wiping them out."

A third of their number was dead, but they charged on to meet a second regiment dispatched against them by Cetwayo. After a fearful fight, this regiment they destroyed also, but now only some 200 of their number were left alive, and, as these were too weak to charge a third time, they formed a circle round a little hill.

"Here Cetwayo poured his power on them; here they fought furiously till not a man of them remained, for here they fell beneath the bodies of their foes."

It was at Ulundi that the power of Cetwayo was broken, and where the Zulus were impressively taught that mere flesh and blood cannot stand against machine guns and breech-loading rifles.

Forming in a square, with field guns at each corner, the white men awaited the onrushing blacks. Naked, howling, brandishing their war spears, the Zulus made rush after rush, always to be met by a withering wall of fire.

Machine guns and rifles mowed down the natives in heaps. The fight became a mere massacre, and still the Zulus clung on, but not a man could get through that awful hail of bullets.

Much of the military success of the Zulus has been due to their methods of drilling and fighting. Each impi, or regiment, is composed of 2000 men, and advances to the attack in three lines of battle.

Years ago a young chief, Dingiswayo, fled to Cape Town for safety during a revolt, and while there saw British troops drilling. When he returned, he introduced the new method in his army, and it became virtually invincible.

The danger from an uprising of these people is a constant fear in South Africa. When it is remembered that in Natal alone there are about a million Zulus against 100,000 white people, the peril can be appreciated.

Photo from the Philadelphia Commercial Museum.